

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 07288 032303Z

42

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 DODE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 SPC-03 LAB-06

SIL-01 DRC-01 CG-00 FMC-04 L-03 AF-10 /086 W

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P R 032230Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO RUEHIWYQSECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3817

INFO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ETRN, AR

SUBJECT: MARITIME AFFAIRS INTRODUCTION OF LASH SERVICE.

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 6992

(B) BUENOS AIRES 7069

1. SUMMARY: SCHEDULED THIRD VISIT OF DELTA LINES LASH VESSEL CREATED NEW DIFFICULTY IN BUENOS AIRES. TUG MECHANICS UNION AGAIN REFUSES TO OPERATE VESSEL AND BARGES. GOA APPEARS UNWILLING LEAN ON UNION AT THIS TIME. DELAT LINES MAY BE FORCED UNLOAD CARGO FOR ARGENTINA IN MONTEVIDEO, TURN LASH VESSEL AROUND NORTHBOUND, LEAVE OUTBOUND CARGO FROM ARGENTINA ON DOCKS AND, THROUGH EXPENSIVE PROCESS BRING IN CONVENTIONAL VESSEL FROM AFRICAN RUN RATHER THAN ABANDON CLIENTS. EMBASSY SEEKING ASSIST DELTA LINES. OUTCOME UNCERTAIN. END SUMMARY

2. THIRD LASH VESSEL VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES BY DELTA NORTE SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 5. FOLLOWING PROBLEMS OF PREVIOUS LASH VESSELS DELTA LINES HAS, SINCE SEPTEMBER 21, SOUGHT PREPARE FOR SMOOTH TURN AROUND. IN THIS THEY HAVE SO FAR BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. TUGBOAT MECHANICS HAVE INVOKED ASSISTANCE ARGENTINE MARITIME FEDERATION (SEE REF B) AND REFUSE OPERATE LASH VESSEL.

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 07288 032303Z

3. SINCE LAST COMMUNICATION TO DEPARTMENT ON THIS MATTER

EMBASSY HAS ACQUIRED COPY OF RESOLUTION ISSUED BY UNDER SECRETARY MERCHANT MARINE ON OCCASION LAST VISIT DELTA MAR. ALTHOUGH TETTAMANTI, UNDERSECRETARY IN FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS, HAD TOLD US ON SEPTEMBER 20 THAT THIS RESOLUTION CONTAINED NOTHING TO SPECIFICALLY BAR FURTHER LASH VESSEL OPERATIONS (SEE PARAGRAPH 7, REFTEL A), RESOLUTION IN FACT HAS ARTICLE WHICH STATES SPECIFICALLY "THIS SYSTEM MAY NOT BE OPERATED IN THE FUTURE UNTIL LAWS REGULATING IT ARE PASSED."

4. EMBASSY HAS AGAIN APPROACHED FOREIGN OFFICE, TETTAMANTI, REQUESTING HIS INTERCESSION TO SEEK GOA AUTHORIZATION FOR NORMAL OPERATIONS DELTA NORTE DUE OCTOBER 5. TETTAMANTI CONTINUES INDICATE GOA OFFICIALS ARE ACTUALLY DISPOSED TO SEE DELTA LINES LASH VESSELS OPERATE NORMALLY. HOWEVER THEY FIND GREAT DIFFICULTY, POLITICALLY, IN FORCING UNIONS TO REVERSE LATTER'S DECISION NOW ON EVE OF INAUGURATION NEW GOVERNMENT.

5. WE ARE CONTINUING EFFORTS WITH FOREIGN OFFICE AND COOPERATING WITH DELTA LINES IN SEEING THAT SHIPPERS WHO WILL BE INCONVENIENCED BY INTERRUPTION LASH SERVICE LEARN OF SITUATION AND NOTIFY GOA AUTHORITIES OF THEIR PROBLEMS.

6. DELTA LINES REP INDICATES DELTA NORTE WILL ARRIVE MONTEVIDEO LATE OCTOBER 3 AND WILL BE HELD FOR SHORT PERIOD TO SEE WHETHER SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND IN BUENOS AIRES TO PERMIT NORMAL OPERATIONS. HE INDICATES THAT IF VISIT DELAT NORTE NOT POSSIBLE HIS FIRM MUST DIVERT CONVENTIONAL VESSEL AVAILABLE IN DAKAR ON OCTOBER 7 TO RIVER PLATE IN ORDER TO PRESERVE DELTA LINES REPUTATION WITH SHIPPERS AND INDICATE TO ANY ENTITY SEEKING TO DAMAGE FIRM'S RECORD OF SERVICE THAT HIS LINE WILLING AND ABLE TO PUT UP FIGHT. HE POINTED OUT SUCH DIVERSION OF VESSEL FROM DAKAR WILL ADD OVER ONE HALF MILLION DOLLARS TO THE COMPANY'S COST.

7. WE UNDERSTAND CAPTAIN CLARK OF DELTA LINES IS IN WASHINGTON. IF WE KNOW HIM AS WE THINK WE DO, LITTLE OF ABOVE INFORMATION WILL BE NEW TO DEPARTMENT OFFICERS.

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 07288 032303Z

8. ACTION REQUESTED: WE SUGGEST DEPARTMENT CONSIDER RAISING FOREGOING WITH AMBASSADOR DE LA PLAZA, SPECIAL ADVISOR TO FONMIN VIGNES, BOTH OF WHOM ARE PRESENTLY IN NEW YORK. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT EXPRESSION OF CONCERN AT THIS LEVEL WILL PRODUCE APPROPRIATE ECHO AT HIGH LEVELS IN GOA.
LODGE

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